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C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 000514

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; PACOM FOR FPA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [TH](#)

SUBJECT: GOB PULLS THE PLUG ON BANGKOK II

REF: A. RANGOON 487 AND PREVIOUS

[1](#)B. BANGKOK 2527

Classified By: COM Carmen Martinez for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: According to an MFA contact, Burma has opted out of the second meeting of the "Bangkok Process" and requested a postponement of at least one month, likely part of an effort to focus exclusively on reconvening the National Convention on May 17. We suspect the GOB realizes that the recent release of two NLD CEC members and the reopening of NLD headquarters is, in the eyes of the international community, no substitute for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi. Should the SPDC continue to detain ASSK, the generals are likely to assiduously avoid any venue where criticism could derail the reconvening of the Convention. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) According to the Director of the Americas Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, U Thant Kyaw, the GOB has officially informed the Thai Government that Burma will not attend the second meeting of the "Bangkok Process," scheduled for April 29-30.

[1](#)3. (C) On April 23, U Thant Kyaw told us the GOB had informed the RTG that Foreign Minister U Win Aung was "not available" in late April and had therefore requested a postponement of Bangkok II for "at least one month." He said that discussions were under way between the GOB and the RTG to identify a new date, a process that has been somewhat hampered by the absence of Deputy FM U Khin Maung Win, who is on leave following the untimely death of his wife earlier this week.

[1](#)4. (C) In response to our query on the reason for postponing the meeting, U Thant Kyaw would only say that the "matter is complicated and difficult to explain." He acknowledged that FM Win Aung had previously agreed to attend the meeting and noted that the RTG had already issued official invitations to participants. However, he added, the FM is "involved in serious matters and must be in Rangoon during the coming weeks."

[1](#)5. (C) Comment: We have seen several signs that the SPDC is clearing the deck to prepare for the reconvening of the National Convention on May 17. In addition to the Bangkok meeting, the GOB has apparently postponed the next round of peace talks with the KNU, which had been scheduled to resume this month. Ultimately, however, the regime's motives involve more than mere scheduling conflicts. Senior GOB officials clearly realize that the recent release of two NLD CEC members and the reopening of NLD headquarters is, in the eyes of the international community, no substitute for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi. Should the SPDC continue to detain ASSK, the generals are likely to assiduously avoid any venue where criticism could derail the reconvening of the National Convention. End Comment.

[1](#)6. (U) This cable has been coordinated with Embassy Bangkok. Martinez